# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# RURAL DEVELOPMENT
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:638
ANSWERED ON:24.11.2006
RURAL KNOWLEDGE CENTRES
Pallani Shamy Shri K.C .

**Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

(a) The main functions of Rural Knowledge Centres ;

(b) The number of such Centres established in various parts of the country during the last three years and current year, State-wise ;

(c)Whether there is any proposal to set up such more Centres in various parts of the country ;

(d) If so, the locations identified for the same, State-wise; and

(e) The time by which these are likely to be set up ?

## Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT(SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL)

(a) The Village Knowledge Centres are being implemented by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development(NABARD) and Council for Advancement of People`s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART).

NABARD: The Hon`ble Union Finance Minister had announced in his budget speech on 28th February, 2005 about setting up of Village Knowledge Centres

(VKCs) by using modern information and communication technology with resource support from Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF). Accordingly, VKCs have been made an eligible item for being supported under RIDF XI(2005-06) onwards.

The VKCs are expected to facilitate better quality Public Services in areas such as e-Governance, social services in the sphere of health, education and environment,provision of business services providing market prices and other information,e-trade opportunities, e-entertainment, e-banking, e-learning, digital photos,e-booking of tickets and internet linked services, etc. Besides, it can also provide innovative value added services in the sphere of marine information systems, disease diagnostic services, educational services, job tracking, banking, entrepreneurial support, supply chain services and telecommunication services, etc.

CAPART: The village knowledge Centre (VKC) is a place to render distant services from a single window point to rural masses especially in remote areas of the country through modern Information and Communication Technology. The knowledge center is connected to a central studio using technology, viz WiMax/VSAT/leased line.There is live interactive sessions in real time by he central speaker with audience at remote villages on content already prepared on any subject that the rural communities might need or desire. The purpose of setting up of a VKC is to bring access to a range of services, content and information to people living in remote villages or areas which do not provide such access otherwise.

(b) NABARD: The Scheme of RIDF support for establishing VKCs was made available to all State Governments by NABARD. Accordingly, Government of Rajasthan has availed of Rs.10 crore sanction from RIDF in 2005-06 for establishing 1000 VKCs.

No State Government has submitted proposal for establishing VKCs during the current year.

CAPART: CAPART is in the process of initiating a pilot project to set up a Village Resource Centre (VRC) having one Central Studio at Muzaffarpur and one Remote Site at Consultancy-cum-Guidance Centre (CGC) Vaishali, District Muzaffarpur, Bihar, with provision for connection to 50 remote sites.

(c)&(d) : NABARD: Though the scheme was offered to all States, only Rajasthan came forward to utilize RIDF support for establishing VKCs. Though the facility for seeking funds from RIDF for VKCs is still open, no other State Government has submitted any proposal to NABARD to establish VKCs with financial support from the RIDF.

CAPART; CAPART has received a proposal from DHAN Foundation, Tamil Nadu to set up one central studio and 10 remote sites. The proposal is being scrutinized.

(e)&(f) : NABARD: The Rajasthan State Government obtained sanction for 1000 VKCs from RIDF XI(2005-06). The State Government is being pursued to set up the VKCs at the earliest.

CAPART: The Pilot Project for setting up of VRC in Bihar is planned to be operational within this financial year.